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Special Final FAWCO Issue

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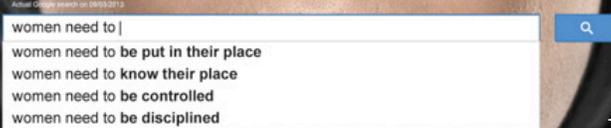
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UN Women strike a cord

FEATURE ARTICLE
A Walk in Their Shoes

One woman's journey through the hills of Bosnia



women need to be seen as equal



unwomen.org

Exclusive

Women, War and Peace

An In-Depth Look into the Five-Part Series

What is your club doing to participate in the 16 Days Campaign? Tell us about it and your club could win a screening of Women, War and Peace. Full details inside.



Actual Google search on 09/03/2013

women shouldn't |

women shouldn't **have rights**

women shouldn't **vote**

women shouldn't **work**

women shouldn't **box**



women shouldn't **suffer from discrimination anymore**

Though women's status across the world has improved over the last few decades, we're still largely second-class citizens in comparison to men.

UN Women / Ogilvy & Mather, Dubai, United Arab Emirates / Creative: Christopher Hunt, Dubai, United Arab Emirates



unwomen.org

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EVAWAC Quarterly

Special Final Issue News Bulletin for FAWCO's Ending Violence Against Women and Children Task Force

Modern Abolitionist
Editor: Tonya Teichert
www.modernabolitionist.org

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Letter from the Editor

Hello and Welcome!

So glad that you are dropping by! This magazine has been a dream in the making for quite a few years and I am so happy to be able to share an exclusive sneak-peak with the faithful FAWCO Task Force followers!

For those of you who have been following the issues that the Task Force has been focusing on, you know that my goal has always been to give you concrete information about the issues pertaining to violence against women and children, but I have also strived to give you tangible things to do to get involved. And that, my dear friends, is the premise behind this magazine.

EVAWAC Quarterly is a first of a kind, full fledged magazine that deals with all issues of human rights for women and children. Ensuring that women have the right to live a life free from violence, oppression, poverty, humiliation and degradation is crucial. But, I also want to make sure that we do not forget about future generations.

We are shaping the minds and lives of the future and, now more than ever, this fact could not be more crucial. As women, we need to stand together, show support and be present. As mothers and mentors, we need to encourage strength, compassion and individuality; promote equality and demand justice.

I hope that you enjoy this issue of EVAWAC Quarterly as there is a lot of information to share. I hope you enjoy it!



Actual Google search on 09/03/2013

women need to |

women need to be put in their place

women need to know their place

women need to be controlled

women need to be disciplined



women need to be seen as equal



unwomen.org

Inequality?

Women make less money, have more difficulty accessing education and affordable health care and face much more violence than our male counterparts.

UN Women / Ogilvy & Mather, Dubai, United Arab Emirates /Creative: Christopher Hunt, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Actual Google search on 09/03/2013

women cannot |

women cannot drive
women cannot be bishops
women cannot be trusted
women cannot speak in church



women cannot accept the way things are

Human Rights are Women's Rights

At the 68th UN General Assembly

By Erica Higbie, UN-Rep. NY

The 68th General Assembly began its 2013-14 session in New York with renewed commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). They also began discussions on the MDGs successor: The Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Efforts have been underway to collect input for these discussions; utilizing social media, online surveys, regional meetings, thematic consultations, youth summits, civil society input and more. Human Rights has been the area of greatest concern from all corners of the globe. Dominant themes within the human rights recommendations include environmental sustainability, peace and security, violence and gender equality.

UN Women is pushing hard for gender considerations across all aspects of the Post 215 Framework. Navi Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the new Executive Director for UN Women have called for a review of the 12 critical areas for Women's Rights as established by the Beijing Platform.

The goal is to get gender equality at the top of the global agenda. "Central to this (Post 2015) universal normative framework is the recognition that the achievement of gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment is relevant in every part of the world; it is everyone's responsibility; and it pertains to every policy area."

FAWCO's Board and network of clubs has recently streamlined and renewed its commitment to Women and Girls issues; Human Rights, Education, Health and Environment. The UN Team will be working hard to elevate women's human rights at the

You can weigh in on the issues by voting in the UN Global Survey for a Better World.

The World We Want is a platform created by the UN and Civil Society to aid in the process of building a global agenda for sustainable development.

CRITICAL AREAS Of Women's Rights

- Human Rights
- Education and training
- Health
- Environment
- Violence
- Armed Conflict
- Poverty
- Economy
- Power and decision making
- Institutional mechanisms for advancement
- Media
- The girl-child

United Nations and to keep you informed on this timely and global reinvigoration of the Human Rights debate.

UNDP Post-2015
Development
Agenda
What's Next for MDGs?



UNDP launched an unprecedented global conversation through which people can help shape the future development agenda that will build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) after 2015.

Three out of the eight millennium development targets – on poverty, slums and water – have been met ahead of the 2015 deadline, but much remains to be done. The future development framework – the Post-2015 agenda – should build on the lessons learned from working toward achieving the MDGs, which have been providing the structure for the UN's development activities since the Millennium Summit in 2000.

To find out more information and how you can help the Post-2015 Agenda visit their [website](#)

Google It?



UN Women / Ogilvy & Mather, Dubai, United Arab Emirates /Creative: Christopher Hunt, Dubai, United Arab Emirates •

UN Women's Inequality Campaign

Written by Tonya Teichert, Chair of Ending Violence Against Women & Children Task Force
Excerpts sourced from "UN Women ad series reveals widespread sexism" from their [website](#)

Can you remember what life was like before Google came along? When we actually had to, dare I say it, pick up a book and actually look for what we needed? Nowadays, in the technological times that we live in, Google is our go-to for all things information. We Google directions, restaurants, books, recipes, reviews, movies. Essentially, we can Google just about everything - even how to discriminate against women!

Usually, when Googling something, having those nice little "suggestions" come in very handy. They help us find what we are looking for and, sometimes, introduce us to something new. But what happens when the suggestions are not so positive?

A striking new UN Women campaign makes use of actual Google search result suggestions to bring attention to the sexist attitudes still held around the world. The series of

ads, developed as a creative idea for UN Women by Mema Ogilvy & Mather Dubai, use genuine Google searches to reveal the widespread prevalence of sexism and discrimination against women. Based on searches dated 9 March, 2013 the ads expose negative sentiments ranging from stereotyping as well as outright denial of women's rights.

"When we came across these

Women make less money, have more difficulty accessing education and affordable health care and face much more violence than our male counterparts.

searches, we were shocked by how negative they were and decided we had to do something with them," says Christopher Hunt, Art Director of the creative team. The idea developed places the text of the Google searches over the mouths of women portraits, as if to silence their voices. "The ads are shocking because

they show just how far we still have to go to achieve gender equality. They are a wakeup call, and we hope that the message will travel far," adds Kareem Shuhaibar, copy writer.

For UN Women, the searches confirm the urgent need to continue making the case for women's rights, empowerment and equality, a cause the organization is pursuing around the world. UN Wom-

en is heartened by the initial strong reaction to the ads and hopes they will spark constructive dialogue globally.

Do you want to join the conversation? Go ahead and give your thoughts on what "women-should" on Twitter using the hashtag **#womenshould**



UN Photo/Logan Abassi

Happy Birthday United Nations!!

68 looks good on you

October 24th marked the 68th birthday of the United Nations! Since 1948 United Nations Day has been celebrated. In 1971, the General Assembly recommended that the day be observed by Member States as a public holiday.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the annual celebration offers a chance to recog-

nize the invaluable contributions of the Organization to peace and common progress. It was with the ratification of the UN Charter that the UN officially came into being. You can read the full story [here](#) and read Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message [here](#).

The UNSC Adopts New Resolution

The UNSC has adopted a new resolution that is urging women's full inclusion in peace

On October 18, 2013 the UN Security Council (UNSC) demonstrated renewed determination to put women's leadership at the center of all efforts to resolve conflict and promote peace. By unanimous vote, the Council adopted a resolution that sets in place stronger measures to enable women to participate in conflict resolution and recovery, and puts the onus on the Security Council, the United Nations, regional organizations and Member States to dismantle the barriers, create the space, and provide seats at the table for women. **UNSC Resolution 2122** puts in

place a roadmap for a more systematic approach to the implementation of commitments on women, peace and security. Concretely, these measures include: the development and deployment of technical expertise for peacekeeping missions and UN mediation teams supporting peace talks; improved access to timely information and analysis on the impact of conflict on women and women's participation in conflict resolution in reports and briefings to the Council; and strengthened commitments to consult as well as include women directly in peace talks.

The resolution recognizes that the impact of conflict on women is exacerbated as a result of inequalities. For example, because of unequal citizenship rights and a lack of access to identity documents women and their children may be rendered stateless, lack access to basic services for survival or lack the ability to reclaim land

and property, post-conflict.

UNSC Resolution 2122 makes some unprecedented advances. It addresses the rights of women who are pregnant as a result of rape during conflict. The international community has recognized through this resolution the need to ensure that humanitarian aid includes support for access to the full range of sexual and reproductive health services, including regarding pregnancies resulting from rape. Lastly, the resolution places gender equality and women's empowerment as critical to international peace and security, underlining that the economic empowerment of women greatly contributes to the stabilization of societies emerging from armed conflict.

There is more awareness than ever of the catastrophic impact of sexual and gender-based violence in war

and the need to prevent it. In peacekeeping contexts, there is a marked increase in the number of practical actions and directives guiding military and police components to address women's security. This includes deployment of gender advisers and experts to UN mediation teams or in post-conflict planning.

International Commissions of Inquiry now routinely include gender crimes investigators, as seen in those established most recently in the context of Côte D'Ivoire, Libya, North Korea and Syria. Historic appointments of women leaders to senior peace and security positions have been made and include Ms. Aïchatou Mindaoudou Souleymane, who became the first woman UN chief mediator, for Darfur. In March this year, Ms. Mary Robinson

became the first woman UN Special Envoy when the UN Secretary-General appointed her as Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region of Africa.

To read the full report on Women, Peace and Security and see what you can do to strengthen the role of women, click [here](#).



Women collecting water in the Sudan.

Image from *Enviro-News and Business* at www.enviro-news.com

Women & Water Imbalance of rights, power & equality

As we get ready to begin another Target Program, we need to really come together to help find solutions. We know the questions and causes. As we continue to see, women and children are more affected by natural disasters, wars, conflicts and famine. The global water crisis is no exception. As we saw with the Water Target Program, there are no easy answers.

The grim reality of the

global water crisis is that it disproportionately impacts on women. Primarily, it is women who manage water in the household; it is women who tend to crops, and it is women who have the main responsibility for raising children. Lack of access to water substantially increases the burden of their responsibilities.

The relatively low status of women in many societies and their lack of economic and cultural power may help to explain why issues of water access and sanitation do not enjoy the global profile that they deserve. Women have often suffered disproportionately from the push to privatize water in the developing world. In many cases however they have also been at the forefront of successfully fighting back and developing workable, public approaches to meeting their communities' water and sanitation needs. It is time that international decision makers recognized that women as experts must be at the heart of developing and delivering solutions to the global water crisis.

By empowering women to be leaders, we can help put them at the table.

FEMICIDE Bill Becomes Law

On October 11, 2013, the Italian Senate made a bold move when they approved a law on femicide. The measure, aimed at preventing crime, punishing perpetrators and protecting women, already passed in the Chamber of Deputies.

Highlight on AWC Hamburg

Kara W of AWC Hamburg talks about its Free the Girls Charity Event: "Hamburg Lends a Hand!" So grab your bras and get ready!

Submitted by Kara Wahn, AWC Hamburg

FAWCO has many committees and sub-committees, one of which serves to prevent violence against women and children. While reading the most recent newsletter, I saw that the Ending Violence against Women and Children Task Force was sending out information about Free the Girls. "What is Free the Girls?" you may ask.

This organization collects new and gently used bras to donate to women in Mozambique who have been rescued from lives of sex trafficking and violence. These women have the opportunity to get back on their feet by selling second-hand clothing. Now, bras may seem like an odd choice, but take a moment and open your underwear drawer. Go ahead!

See how full it is with bras you probably might have worn once in two years? We buy things, wear them twice, never return them, and hoard them until we have no choice but to throw them out. Let's put them to use rather than making them garbage!

In January, I will put together a final donation location and dessert evening for our members. I plan on also giving a small presentation about FAWCO's EVAWAC committee and free the girls and how our members can help lend a hand, regardless of how much free time and money they have on their hands!

Here's how to start: You'll notice the event in November for a books' and DVD's exchange. Send any bras you may have to this event or contact me, Kara at karawahn@gmail.com, for information or to set up a drop off. Talk to friends and neighbors about any they may have to contribute! Lastly, educate yourself at [Free the Girls](#) to learn more about this fantastic organization and what you can do to help. Keep a lookout in your inbox and in Currents for the final donation and tally of how much we have gathered in January. We need women like you, our members, to help other women who are less fortunate! Free the Girls!

Free the Girls
Donate a Bra,
Empower a Woman



Free The Girls is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides job opportunities for survivors of sex trafficking. They collect gently used bras and donate them to the women as starting inventory for their own business selling the bras.

Why Bras?

The women they work with were sold into prostitution, often as children. Bras provide a GREAT INCOME as second-hand clothing is a profitable market in many countries around the world. A SAFE ENVIRONMENT providing an opportunity for these women to work with other women. FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE as most of the women were sold into prostitution as children, only 8-10 years old, having their youth and their lives stolen from them, they missed out on going to school and getting an education. Selling bras gives them the flexibility to work around their education. SUSTAINABLE MODEL Once a program has been started with a safe house, it is designed to sustain itself. MINIMAL EFFECT ON LOCAL MARKETS There is no doubt that second-hand clothing had an effect on local production of clothing in Africa in the past.

To learn more about Free the Girls, visit their [website](#).

To organize your very own Bra Drive, go [here](#) for more details.

MAKE SURE TO LET US KNOW!

STOP Before you Shop!

What's in your cart?

We are a nation of responsible people. **Right?** We know to drink responsibly. We know to act responsibly. So why is the message about buying responsibly not louder? Are we that blinded by consumerism that we never stop to think about the products we spend money on? What is really behind the things that we buy?

Do you realize that the things we purchase, no matter how small, can have a significant impact on the Modern Day Slave Trade? Would you still buy that favorite handbag, coffee or mobile phone if you knew the human cost to make it? Are you ready to ask yourself what is really behind the things that we buy?

As we approach the holiday season, now is the time to start thinking about these questions and making an impact on the modern day slave trade by buying responsibly. But what does that mean?

Recently there have been quite a number of reports about factories collapsing, or burning to the ground, that were full of people! This is nothing new. It has been happening for decades, perhaps longer. But because of people like you (the ones who want to see change) we are seeing that we can hold those who are responsible

accountable. Sadly, we will never know the true number of lives lost in these cases, as majority of them were undocumented or enslaved workers. When is the point that we say enough is enough?!

First, it means educating ourselves about the human cost of producing goods. Some of the smaller, everyday products we find at local markets or grocers may have been produced by women and children and men who have been forced to work in inhumane conditions. They are subjected to little or no pay, physical and verbal abuse (or both) and, in some cases, sexual violence. They are forced to work long hours without a break, no fresh air or



Source: USDesignStudio; via: contract worker

food in some rather extreme conditions both inside and out. You can find them in all industries, from textiles to farms, from food processing plants to jewelry to electronics. This list goes on . . .

So, what can you do as a consumer? Learn about safe practices and find out which companies are doing business ethically and which ones are not. If you have a favorite brand that you like to buy, see how they measure up. Not sure where to start? That's okay; we have a list to get you started.

Here is a short list of some good resources to start. This is not a complete list by any means, but it can get you going in the right direction.

Free the Slaves

www.freetheslaves.net



Free the Slaves is an organization that I L.O.V.E. Period. Co-Founded by Kevin Bales, the author of “Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy” (1999), and a sister organization to Anti-Slavery International, the world’s oldest human rights organization. Free the Slaves not only give you the numerical and empirical data about the modern form of slavery, but they give real and practical solutions and exchange of ideas to actually make it happen. I must admit I am completely smitten by the no-holds-barred manner of putting it out to the people. Not only are they working with

front line grassroots organizations around the world, they are making an impact on the lives of women and children (and men) around the world. Stock full of useful and inspiring information, books, programs, and actionable items, they also have the largest video library on modern day slavery. Their latest video: ‘Becoming A Slavery-Free Business: Removing Slavery From Product Supply Chains’ is a great tool that you can use to engage your community and bring together a coalition of local suppliers that don’t want to profit from human slavery.



Free2Work

www.free2work.org

THE STORY BEHIND THE BARCODE

Free2Work is a product of the NotForSale Campaign where the concept is the story behind the barcode. What good, or bad, practices are companies using to bring their product to the market. How does their report card look? You can look up informa-

tion by industry or by name to see how they score overall and to see how they score on the individual scoring components.

Go ahead, check out their website and see if your favorite brands get a good grade.



NFS Campaign

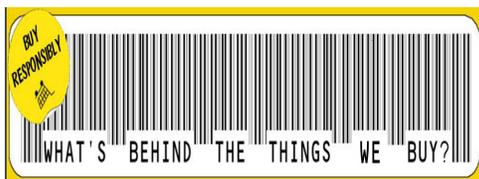
www.notforsalecampaign.org

The NotForSale Campaign, an organization that was co-founded by David Batstone, author of the book “Not for Sale,” are doing tremendous work with the modern day slavery victims and survivors. Another item to note is that the NFS-Campaign does not only help you find out what’s behind your barcode, but they step up and dig in with international projects that put people to work, significantly decrease the risks for potential new victims, and help to provide communities with a sense of economic empowerment. Here are a couple of the NFS sustainability projects:

The Home Soup Project in the Netherlands, takes women who have been sexually exploited and provides them with professional culinary training so that they are empowered economically and morally. While you cannot purchase their soup online, you can buy it in various stores in the Netherlands (which you can always ship as gifts for the holidays) The “NFS Soup” was created to be a tool in the fight against human trafficking. Cleverly named “This Soup Is Not For Sale” comes in four unique flavors based on recipes inspired by the women training at the NFS soup kitchen in Amsterdam; Pumpkin Ginger, Cream

of Mushroom, Beef Goulash, and Tomato Beet.

Rebbl Tonic REBBL was created to be the world’s finest organic, ethically-sourced, therapeutic strength herbal tonic. Their mission is to provide an easy, delicious way to experience the amazing health benefits of tonic herbs that supports a unique business model with direct impact in the fight to end global human trafficking. The natural treasures of the Amazon are truly invaluable, yet this region’s inhabitants are living at the margins of the global economy. Today’s supply chains must be rebuilt to create opportunities where there are none. They have partnered with NFS to address the root cause of slavery in the Peruvian Amazon: economic vulnerability. The belief is that when you have a positive “Impact sourcing” it will generate cycles of empowerment: Their plan is to use this model to create jobs and grow social economies in other regions of the world where labor exploitation thrives. What can get better than that, helping the body, the environment and making an impact on human slavery. The Rebbl Tonic’s can be purchased in select stores in California and they ship within the US. Hopefully international orders will be available soon!



BuyResponsibly

www.buyresponsibly.org

BuyResponsibly is an organization whose mission is to raise consumers’ awareness on the fact that the products that we buy everyday may be made by people who have been trafficked, enslaved and forced or exploited into labor. They believe that by demanding more social guarantees from retailers that we, as consumers and human beings, have the power to end

modern day slavery. Their motto: “ask your retailer about the products you buy and eliminate trafficking from your shopping cart!” They have a number of resources and tools help you get educated, find responsible food producers, hold a BuyResponsibly event and even sample letters that you can provide to local retailers. Check out their website [here](http://www.buyresponsibly.org).

Actual Google search on 04/03/2013

women should |

women should stay at home

women should be slaves

women should be in the kitchen

women should not speak in church



women should have the right to make their own decisions



unwomen.org

Ground-breaking PBS series gets it right

Women, War & Peace is a bold and gripping five-part PBS television series challenging the conventional wisdom that war and peace are men's domains.

WOMEN WAR & PEACE

The vast majority of today's conflicts are not fought by nation states and their armies, but rather by informal entities: gangs and warlords using small arms and improvised weapons. The series, which premiered in October 2011 on PBS, reveals how the post-Cold War proliferation of small arms has changed the landscape of war, with women becoming primary targets and suffering unprecedented casualties. Yet they are simultaneously emerging as necessary partners in brokering lasting peace and as leaders in forging new international laws governing conflict. With depth and complexity, *Women, War & Peace* spotlights the stories of women in conflict zones from Bosnia to Afghanistan and Colombia to Liberia, placing women at the center of an urgent dialogue about conflict and security, and reframing our understanding of modern warfare.

Featuring narrators Matt Damon, Tilda Swinton, Geena Davis and Alfre Woodard, *Women, War & Peace* is the most comprehensive global media initiative ever mounted on the roles of women in war and peace. The series will present its ground-breaking message across

the globe by utilizing all forms of media, including U.S. and international primetime television, radio, print, web, and worldwide community screenings, and will be accompanied by an educational and outreach initiative designed to advance international accountability in regard to women and security. *Women, War & Peace* is a co-production of THIRTEEN and Fork Films.

The five episodes in the series

I*Came to Testify* is the moving story of how a group of 16 women who had been imprisoned and raped by Serb-led forces in the Bosnian town of Foca broke history's great silence – and stepped forward to take the witness stand in an international court of law. Their remarkable courage resulted in a triumphant verdict that led to new international laws about sexual

Tonya Teichert, Chair
Ending Violence Against
Women & Children Task Force

**Some contents of this article taken from PBS.org/Women-War-and-Peace and is being duplicated for informational purposes only*

EVAWAC Quarterly Magazine

violence in war. At the time of the original airing, Bosnia was once again in the headlines with the capture of Bosnian Serb wartime general Ratko Mladic, the women agreed to speak for the first time since then, on condition that we keep their identities hidden for their protection. "Witness 99," who was held at gunpoint for a month with dozens of other women in a sports hall in the center of town remembers: "We were treated like animals. But that was the goal: to kill a woman's dignity." Their remarkable courage resulted in a triumphant verdict that led to new international laws about sexual violence in war. Returning to Bosnia 16 years after the end of the conflict, *I Came to Testify* also explores the chasm between this seismic legal shift and the post-war justice experienced by most of Bosnia's women war survivors.

Pray the Devil Back to Hell is the astonishing story of the Liberian women who took on the warlords and regime of dictator Charles Taylor in the midst of a brutal civil war, and won

a once unimaginable peace for their shattered country in 2003. As the rebel noose tightened around the capital city of Monrovia, thousands of women – ordinary mothers, grandmoth-

male head of state, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Inspiring and uplifting, *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* is a compelling example of how grassroots activism can alter the history of nations.



Women, War & Peace Official Logo,
Provided by Peaceisloud.org

ers, aunts and daughters, both Christian and Muslim – formed a thin but unshakable line between the opposing forces. Armed only with white T-shirts and the courage of their convictions, they literally faced down the killers who had turned Liberia into hell on earth. In one memorable scene, the women barricaded the site of stalled peace talks in Ghana and refused to move until a deal was done. Their demonstrations culminated in Taylor's exile and the rise of Africa's first fe-

Peace Unveiled When the U.S. troop surge was announced in late 2009, women in Afghanistan knew that the ground was being laid for peace talks with the Taliban. *Peace Unveiled* follows three women in Afghanistan who are risking their lives to make sure that women's rights don't get traded away in the deal and to ensure that women have a seat at the negotiating table. One

is a savvy parliamentarian who participated in writing the Afghan constitution that guarantees equality for women; another, a former midwife who is one of the last women's rights advocates alive in Kandahar; and the third, a young activist who lives in a traditional family in Kabul. Convinced that the Taliban will have demands that jeopardize women's hard-earned gains, they maneuver against formidable odds to have their voices heard in a peace jirga and high peace council. This film goes behind Kabul's closed doors as the women's case is made to U.S. Ambassador Karl Eikenberry, U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues Melanne Verveer, General David Petraeus and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who promises the women that "peace and justice can't come at the cost of women and women's lives." But can this promise be kept?

The War We Are Living travels to Cauca, a mountainous region in Colombia's Pacific southwest, where the "other" Colombia is re-



Being an international organization, we try to give a broad range of activities that you and your clubs can do to raise the important issues. Sometimes, it's not always easy for some of you to get a hold of some of the films and books that we recommend.

However, as we saw with last year's Half the Sky initiative during the 16 Days Campaign, I knew there had to be a way to do it again. Do you want to have your very own screening kit for **Women, War & Peace** for your 16 Days event? It's easy. All you

have to do is send us your most passionate and creative ideas for your screening and you could be chosen the winner. For more details on how to enter, send an email [here](#).

This is a special promotion from Modern Abolitionist that is being offered to FAWCO club members for their 16 Days Campaign participation

vealed. In rural areas far away from the capital, where the war is all too real – and now, instead of over drugs, the battle is over gold. In a mountainous region in Colombia's Pacific southwest, two extraordinary Afro-Colombian women are fighting to hold onto the gold-rich land that has sustained their community through small-scale mining for

centuries. Clemencia Carabali and Francia Marquez are part of a powerful network of female leaders, who found that in wartime women can organize more

“In today's wars, it can be more dangerous to be a woman than a soldier.”

Geena Davis, narrator of War Defined

freely than men. As they defy paramilitary death threats and insist

on staying on their land, Carabali and Marquez are standing up for a generation of Colombians who have been terrorized and forcibly displaced as a deliberate strategy of war. If

they lose the battle, they and thousands of their neighbors will join Colombia's four million people – most of them women and children – who have been uprooted from their homes and livelihoods.

Wa r

Redefined, the capstone of Women, War & Peace, challenges the conventional wisdom that war and peace are

men's domain through incisive interviews with leading thinkers, Secretaries of State and seasoned survivors of war and peace-making. Their insights reveal how the post-Cold War proliferation of small arms has changed the landscape of war, so that in many conflicts today it is more dangerous to be a woman than a soldier. Simultaneously, they describe how women are changing the rules of engagement in conflict hotspots all over the world. *War Redefined* includes probing conversations with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and her female predecessors, Condoleezza Rice and Madeleine Albright; Liberian peace activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Leymah Gbowee; Bosnian war crimes investigator Fadila Memisevic; Zain-

SCREENING TIP

At these in-person events, hosts are encouraged to plan a dialogue to follow every screening, which can include guest speakers or a moderated audience conversation. Post-screening discussion has shown that some viewers recognize shared experiences with women in Bosnia, Liberia, Afghanistan and Colombia despite vast differences in location, culture, ethnicity and religion. The power of film combined with dialogue creates a unique forum to inspire and foster community-level action.

ab Salbi, Founder of Women for Women International; globalization expert Moises Naim; and Cynthia Enloe of Clark University, among others.

Throughout the series, narration is performed by some unexpected voices and there are interviews with of the most fascinating and empowered people who are working to end violence against women in all forms give their perspective on what can be done to eradicate these forms of violence.

“What if we looked at war through a woman’s eyes?”

“What if we looked at war through a woman’s eyes? What if we looked beyond familiar images of male soldiers and ammunition and saw women—emerging as witnesses, courageous survivors, peace activists, political negotiators, advocates for justice, and heads of state?”

To honor the October anniversary of the landmark [UN Resolution 1325](#) on Women, Peace and Secu-

urity, this is the absolute perfect film series to screen during your 16 Days Campaign and openly discuss women’s leadership. Due to the fact that there are too many conflict regions and civil unrests around the world, this is issue demands our full attention now, for it has gone unattended for far too long. One of the best things about this series, in my opinion, is that it poses some basic questions that can be a wonderful starting ground for in-depth and honest dialogue about the role of women in peace and conflict and about the role of women in leadership.

If you are in the US, you can view full episodes of the entire series on-line at [Women, War & Peace](#) or you can purchase the complete series DVD set. If you are outside of the US and have access to ordering in the States, I would recommend that you start your [order](#) now as PBS is selling the entire series for a discounted price of \$39.99 with free two-day shipping (in the US). Or, if your club is super creative, you have the chance to win a screening for your 16 Days Campaign event!



Some important licensing information you need to know, especially if you are in GERMANY, AUSTRIA, SWITZERLAND, LIECHTENSTEIN, LUXEMBOURG, PROVINCE OF BOZEN FOR THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF SOUTHERN TYRL, THE PROVINCE OF EUPEN IN BELGIUM or the PROVINCE OF NORTH-SCHLESWIG IN DENMARK

If you purchase the DVD set, and would like to host a screening, you can announce all films **EXCEPT** Pray the Devil Back to Hell. Due to licensing restrictions, this film is unable to be shown in a public setting or officially announced.

If you want to know if your region is restricted or would like to know how you can show this film, contact me

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
16 DÍAS DE ACTIVISMO CONTRA LA VIOLENCIA DE GÉNERO
16 JOURS D'ACTIVISME CONTRE LA VIOLENCE DE GENRE
25 NOV - 10 DEC <http://16dayscwgj.rutgers.edu>



What are you planning?

Again this year, the Task Force is encouraging FAWCO member clubs to participate in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign, November 25—December 10, 2013. This year the campaign continues the theme of “From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Let’s Challenge Militarism and End Violence Against Women!”

The 2013 campaign focuses on three areas of priority which compliment FAWCO’s current Target Program: Human Rights for Women. EVAWAC will focus our efforts on the third priority: sexual violence during and after conflict. For more information on the focus of the campaign see their [theme announcement](#).

Increasingly women and children are becoming the victims of war. Forms of sexual violence such as rape, forced “marriage,” sexual mutilation and slavery, forced impregnation and sterilization are often used as deliberately planned weapons of war. In fact, in some conflicts, it has become more dangerous to be a woman than to be a soldier. These forms of sexual violence not only create severe and lasting damage, both physically and psychologically, for the women whose rights are so brutally violated, but also exacerbate the underlying conflicts. The violence that women experience in war is one extreme on a continuum of violence perpetrated against women. In their 2002 assessment of the impact of armed conflict on women, *Women, War, Peace*, Elisabeth Ren (former Executive Director of UNIFEM) and Ellen

Johnson Sirleaf (president of Liberia) observe:

“The extreme violence that women suffer during conflict does not arise solely out of the conditions of war; it is directly related to the violence that exists in women’s lives during peacetime. Throughout the world, women experience violence because they are women, and often because they do not have the same rights or autonomy that men do.....Without political rights or authority, they often have little recourse.”

The authors note that since such violence against women often remains unpunished, it becomes an accepted norm that escalates during

conflict when violence in general increases. Women are not only subjected to violence by opponent forces, but also generally face an increase in domestic violence as the general atmosphere of violence increases. In addition, various forms of sex trafficking tend to increase during conflict as women become more and

more vulnerable while at the same time, law and order breaks down. While women are increasingly adversely affected by war, the encouraging note to make is that they are also increasingly becoming agents of change in their communities. An amazing and inspiring example of women taking matters into their own hands is illustrated in the documentary, “Pray the Devil Back to Hell” which is part of the *Women, War & Peace* PBS Series. This movie tells the astonishing story of Liberian women who forced the Liberian govern-



ment and rebels to reach a peace agreement and then worked to elect the first woman president in Liberia. Talk about girl power! This is an inspiring story to show just how effective women can be as change agents during times of conflict, and peace.

In addition, the United Nations Security Council has recognized the importance of the issues women face in war by passing several resolutions addressing women, peace and security. Most recently, on June 24, 2013, the Council passed, by unanimous vote, Resolution 2106, specifically addressing the prevalence of sexual violence in conflict. The resolution recognizes the need to aggressively prosecute such crimes and to challenge the myths that such violence is “a cultural phenomenon or an inevitable consequence of war.” In addition, Resolution 2106 acknowledges that women’s overall social, political and economic empowerment as well as the involvement of men in the prevention of gender-based violence are crucial factors in eliminating sexual violence in conflict. The resolution also affirms that sexual violence used as a tactic of war can constitute a war crime and “can significantly exacerbate and prolong situations of armed conflict and may impede the restoration of international peace and security.” Significantly the council recognizes the importance of women’s participation in mediation, post-conflict recovery and peace building efforts and the necessity for addressing sexual violence in all peace negotiations. (You can find the full text of the resolution [here](#).) While the Security Council’s recognition of these pertinent issues is encouraging, they will have little impact without actual implementation by member States of the Council’s recommended actions. The resolutions are just a beginning, and much work remains to be done.

The Ending Violence Against Women and Children Task Force invites member clubs to stand up against sexual violence in conflict by participating in the 16 Days Campaign and raising awareness of the issues.

Guiglo, Côte d’Ivoire: The following recounts the lawlessness and violence by rebels and bandits who attack homes and travelers. Babies to 70 year old women have been raped during these raids. Women going to market, transport drivers, and cocoa farmers in western Côte d’Ivoire are targeted during the cocoa season by bandits preying on the vital cocoa trade:

“You hear of an attack almost every Tuesday. That’s market day here in Guiglo, so women from surrounding villages come into town. Some come on transport, but most walk, leaving when the sun rises. They are often in groups; the men are back working in the fields.

On several of the secondary roads that lead into town there is almost always an attack. The women’s money is taken and often some of them are raped. Due to the lucrative cocoa trade, attacks on drivers and market vendors, among others occur frequently by bandits on the road. Women walking to and from the market are frequent targets.”

Excerpt from Human Rights Watch, “Afraid and Forgotten”. October 22, 2010. http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/report/cotedivoire1010webwcover_0.pdf

Source: Take Action Kit 2013
Information Sheet 3: Sexual Violence During and After Conflict

A Few Facts on Sexual Violence During and After Conflict

Source: “Facts on Gender-Based Violence” from 16 Days Campaign

- Reports on rape during conflict detail profound brutality towards women and girls, including serious beatings, mutilation or removal of the genitals, rape with sharp objects, and gunshots to the genitals.
- Due to systematic and exceptionally violent gang rapes, doctors in the Democratic Republic of Congo now classify vaginal destruction as a war crime.
- Thousands of Congolese girls and women suffer from vaginal fistula and tissue tears in the vagina, bladder and rectum after surviving brutal rapes in which guns, branches and broken bottles were used to violate them.
- In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, it is believed that around 200,000 women and girls have been raped since 1998.
- Estimates of the total number of women subjected to sexual violence during the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina during the 1990s vary from 14,000 to 50,000.

Do You Have Your Take Action Kit?

Time is getting closer. If you still haven't gotten your 16 Days 2013 Take Action Kit you can get it [here](#). And, to get you started, here are a few suggestions they recommend.

Join the International Campaign to Stop Rape & Gender Violence: Become part of the first ever global collaboration between women Nobel Peace Laureates, international advocacy organizations, groups and individuals working at the international, regional and community levels to end sexual violence in conflict. Call for urgent and bold political leadership to prevent rape in conflict, to protect civilians and rape survivors, and to demand justice for all. Visit [Stop Rape in Conflict](#) to see how you can get involved.

Advocate: The UN Security Council has passed resolutions (1325, 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, and 2106) related to women, peace and security, and governments must make commitments to implement them. Advocate for women's participation in decision making at all levels on peace and security issues. Encourage policy makers to make addressing the crime of sexual violence in conflict a priority, and to support local, national, and international prevention, protection, and justice mechanisms. More information is available through the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders: <http://www.gnwp.org>.

Create Safe Spaces: If your organization has experience with counseling survivors of violence, develop trainings to teach others about proper counseling protocol, available legal and medical resources, confidentiality, collection of evidence and testimonies, and sensitivity to survivors.

Spread the Word: Invite the media to report on your activities and ask them to raise the issue of conflict-related sexual violence in their reporting. Give members of the media the guidance to report on violations with sensitivity and that do not further traumatize or endanger survivors. Use your social media sites to share information about opportunities to take action. Follow organizations that are active on social media, such as CWGL (<https://www.facebook.com/CenterforWomensGlobalLeadership>) and MADRE (<https://www.facebook.com/madre.org>).

Support an Organization: Connect with local and international women's organizations working in conflict areas or with displaced and refugee communities and provide financial and/or moral support for their advocacy and survivor support work. If you have access to financial resources, consider hosting a fundraiser for an organization that has a proven track record of working with survivors of sexual violence.

Men & Boys: Men and boys who believe in gender equality are important allies in activism to end gender-based violence in conflict. Invite men and boys you know to attend a 16 Days event with you and ask them to share their ideas about how to involve their peers in ending violence. For more ideas, visit the [White Ribbon Campaign](#), the [MenEngage Alliance](#) or the [Man Up Campaign](#).

What are you planning?

So, what are your clubs' plans for a 16 Days event? Not sure where to start? Need a bit of inspiration? Never fear, The Party Girl is here! A short list of some creative ideas to get you thinking outside of the box for your next event.

Get Progressive! With Dinner . . .

One of the most important things that we can do to solve problems is to TALK! Creating situations where honest and open dialogue can take place. Well, what better way to do that than with food and drink? Here are a couple of ideas that you can use to have an engaging and educational time.

Hosting a dinner party fundraiser is always a good and safe option right? BUT, let's get edgy and take a "normal" dinner party to a whole new level by adding a bit of a twist to it. Let's get Progressive!

Hosting a **Progressive Dinner Party** is totally worth the effort and can be a great tool to engage people. Plus, it's just F.U.N. If you are not familiar with the concept let me explain. First, you have to decide how many courses are part of your menu (cocktails, appetizer, salad, main, desert, cheese, wine, etc. . .) Once you have determined your courses, you

get a different person for each course. Now, here is where it gets really fun. You send out your invitations for dinner to start at the location of the first course. When your guests arrive, they are then given a second invitation to their next location for the second course, and so on until the dinner is over. So, other than those planning the event, no one else will know where they have to go to for the next course.

This is a great method in educating people without overwhelming them (or boring them because face it, we have ALL been to at least one those parties). It is also a good tool because you can liken their "not knowing" where the next course will be to women and children not knowing where their next meal will come from. Or what their future holds.

A way to really spice up this idea is to have each course represent a specific issue that is part

of the 16 Days Campaign. One related to Human Rights violations of women and children, modern day slavery, or violence against women and children. The list is endless. You could also have each course represent a specific country where there are the most violations against women and children. The goal is to use the time of each course to engage and educate people.

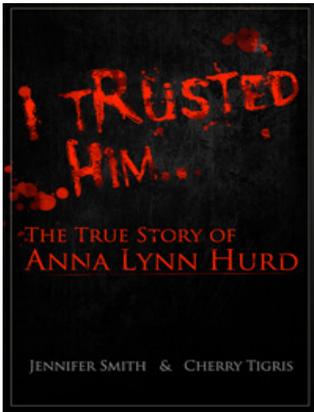
As an alternative, you could get your local restaurants involved in the cause and pick different locations based on the same criteria. The good part about this option is that you are getting the community involved (which can be a great tool as a fundraiser as the restaurants will help you advertise plus it is good PR for them) and there are NO DISHES!!

Now, that is what I call a win-win!

Book It!

This ain't your ordinary book club

There is a plethora of books that you can use for a book event, and not just for a 16 Days Campaign. The list can be overwhelming so, instead of getting dizzy in the book store, here are a few choices that you SHOULD pop into your bag, on your iPad, tablet or Kindle. Buy the hard copies for your book club or, simply buy them for Christmas gifts to enlighten others!



“Are you missing something so simple that it could change someone’s life? Even save someone’s life?”

Upon seeing JUST THE COVER of this book, I knew I had to read it. October is Domestic Violence Awareness month and, usually, we associate that with spousal and child abuse, but there are other dark

corners. This is the story of a beautiful 16-year old girl who did what all teenagers do, she fell in love. Tragically, it was with the wrong guy. Were there warning signs? Yep. Were they noticed? Probably. But did anyone take the time to actually pay attention to the signs? These are some of the many questions that this book puts forward.

This book, written by Anna’s mother, Jennifer Smith, takes you on a journey of reflection and hindsight about the events that led to her daughter’s death.

Having come from a childhood of abuse herself, Jennifer strived to be the parent she never had growing up. Leaving her hometown of St. Paul, Minnesota for Texas, Jennifer Smith was a single mother with the world on her shoulders. Committed to breaking the cycle of domestic violence that had played out in her own childhood and young

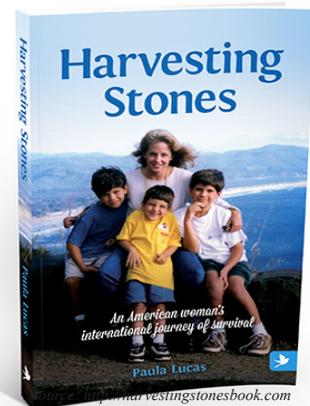
adult years, she set out to make a new future for herself and for her children. The unfortunate events that led to her daughter’s death would serve as the foundation for what she calls her true purpose in life. Helping other parents and teens with awareness about domestic violence as it relates to teen dating is her sole mission in writing the book and in continuing her own journey toward peace and understanding.

If you have daughters, this is a must read. If you have sons, this is a must read. Learn what some of the “warning signs” are and the most important thing is to make sure that you teach both girls and boys about what healthy, positive relationships are supposed to look like. Honestly look like.

In observation of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, you can download the e-book version FREE at [Foboko](#).

San Francisco shortly after college, her life transformed. She spent fourteen years living and traveling overseas in Europe, the Middle East and the Far East. A dream comes true as an American expat, except she hid terrible secrets that almost cost the lives of her children and herself.

The night before she fled Dubai in April 1999, she made a covenant with God that she would help other American women and children being terrorized in foreign countries if



For those of you who have been following the Task Force, you already know about Paula Lucas and her amazing story. She has shared her heartwrenching experience with us at conferences and trainings. She is truly a global advocate for domestic violence victims worldwide. Now, she bears even more of her soul in this inspiring account of her journey. When Paula Lucas, a Catholic farm girl raised in the agricultural heartland of California met an internationally known foreign photographer in

she successfully escaped the next day. She did. Seeking safety at her sister's home in Portland, Oregon, she thought her nightmare would end. It didn't. She was forced to flee once again. Homeless and on the run at forty with three little boys, they lived like gypsies along the California and Oregon coast hiding from the man that threatened, "I will hunt you down and slaughter you like animals no matter where you are in the world."

From victim to victor, Paula weaves you through her astonishing life journey for the first time since her

escape almost fifteen years ago in this tell-all memoir.

This would be a great book to use for an awareness event for your club or community. You can purchase it on Amazon (hard back and Kindle) or from Americans Overseas Domestic Violence Crisis Center (AODVC).

Do you have some questions that you want to ask the author? Check out the AODVC website or Harvesting Stones website to find out more information.

Let's Talk FGM . . . A Culture of Pain

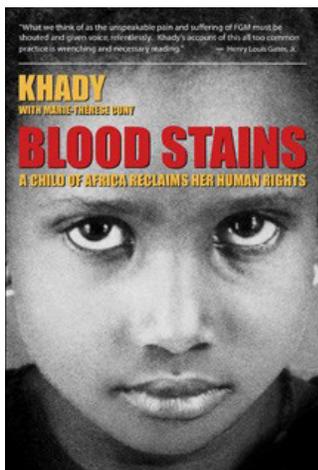
On December 20, 2012 the UN passed a resolution banning the practice of Female Genital Mutilation, a practice that affects about 100-140 million women and girls worldwide. Sadly, it is estimated that an additional three million girls are at risk of being subjected to the practice globally. This brutal practice is not just being performed in tents in the desert or far away lands. It can be happening to some-

one living right next door to you.

The FGM resolution urges countries to condemn all harmful practices that affect women and girls, in particular female genital mutilations, and to take all necessary measures, including enforcing legislation, awareness-raising and allocating sufficient resources to protect women and girls from this form of violence. It calls for special attention to

protect and support women and girls who have been subjected to female genital mutilations, and those at risk, including refugee women and women migrants.

As we approach the one year anniversary of this landmark resolution, here are a few books and movies that you can use to educate and inspire an event for 16 Days and beyond!



Source: *UnCut/Voices Press*

BLOOD STAINS is a compelling story of what it means to be a girl in some cultures.

Born, raised and mutilated in a small village in Senegal before being sent to a cousin-husband in France to bear 3 children before the age of 19, Khady had cause for rebellion. Yet her bravery and spirit shine through in this powerful page-turning memoir that is sure to shock, move and inspire. Prepare for a coming of age story that will take you from rural Senegal to the United Nations, and leave you filled with purpose. **BLOOD STAINS** is the story of a life that should have shattered,

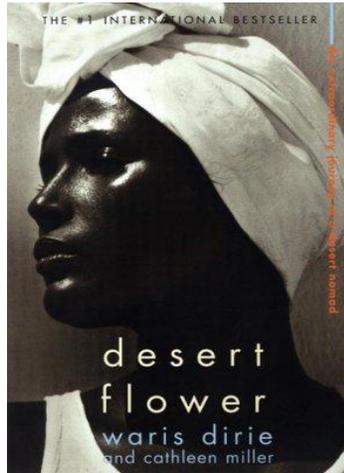
but against all odds, triumphed. **BLOOD STAINS** became a best seller in 2005 when it was released in France as *Mutilée* and is available in 18 languages. Aside from the acclaim of the book and the strength of a woman, the English translation of this book was done by Dr. Tobe Levin, a recognized expert on FGM, one of the first to publish essays on the subject, founding President of FORWARD - Germany and one of the most amazing and inspirational women that I have the honor and privilege of calling my friend.

You can purchase the book through **UnCut/VOICES Press**

Desert Flower is truly an account of an EXTRAordinary journey of a nomad. This story goes beyond tragic as it is one that shows how strong women can be. This book is an inspirational story of strength, courage and resilience and I recommend you go and get it now.

Waris Dirie's memoir is a gripping tale of how, at the age of five, she was mutilated in the desert, a day that changed her life and her course forever. At thirteen, when she learned that her father was going to marry her off to a considerably older man to be his fourth wife, she had no other choice than to run away from her oppres-

sive life in the African desert. She was illiterate and impov-



erished, with nothing to her name but a tattered shawl. Traveling alone across the dangerous Somali desert to Mogadishu was only the first leg of a remarkable journey

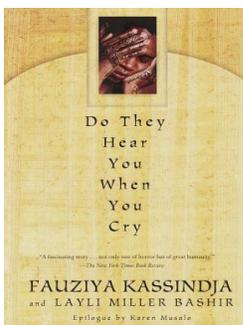
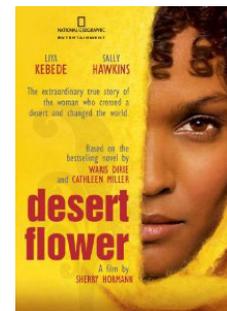
that would take her to London, working as a house servant, and then being "discovered" one day by renowned fashion photographer, Terry Donaldson. That encounter would forever change her life and place her at nearly every corner of the globe as an internationally renowned fashion model. While her story is one of fairy tales, she chose to show the nightmare in an interview with *Marie Claire* magazine where she shared the story of that day in the desert at the age of five. This sparked a movement that ultimately led her to New York City, where she became a human rights ambassador for the U.N. If this book does not inspire you, then you do not have blood in your veins.

If you are more of a visual person you can also get an adaptation of the book and watch the movie.

Style & Design. In 2003, she was the first woman of color to become the face of Estée Lauder cosmetics.

Waris is played by Liya Kebede, an international supermodel, actress and philanthropist. Born and raised in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Kebede has been on the cover of such illustrious fashion magazines as *Vogue*, *V*, *Elle*, *Harper's Bazaar* and *Time's*

You can get your copy from Amazon, or anywhere DVD's are sold or you can order it from National Geographic where proceeds of the sales go to support their organization. Again, win-win!



Do They Hear You When You Cry is an unforgettable chronicle of one woman's resilience, perseverance and triumph.

Fauziya Kassindja had an idyllic childhood in Togo, West Africa, sheltered from the tribal practices of polygamy and genital mutilation. But all of that ended with her beloved father's sudden death.

At age seventeen she was forced into an arranged marriage and told to prepare for *kakia*, the ritual also known as female genital mutilation. It is a ritual no woman can refuse. But Fauziya dared to try.

This is her story--told in her own words--of fleeing Africa just hours before the ritual *kakia* was to take place,

of seeking asylum in America only to be locked up in U.S. prisons, and of meeting Layli Miller Bashir, a law student who became Fauziya's friend and advocate during her horrifying sixteen months behind bars. Layli enlisted help from Karen Musalo, an expert in refugee law and acting director of the American University International Human Rights Clinic. In addition to devoting her own considerable efforts to the case, Musalo assembled a team to fight with her on Fauziya's behalf. Ultimately, in a landmark decision in immigration history, Fauziya Kassindja was granted asylum on June 13, 1996.

A Walk in Their Shoes

Therese Hartwell of AW Eastern Province, gives a moving and poignant reminder about loss, perseverance and hope, during and after war. She participated in the “March for Peace” sponsored by Women for Women International and shares her story with us.



Written by Therese Hartwell,
Executive Committee Chair of War & Peace
Ending Violence Against Women & Children
Task Force

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to find yourself in the middle of a war, trying to escape with your life? How would you react? How do you think the experience would affect you? In July 2012, I had the extraordinary opportunity to taste, on a very limited scale, such an experience.

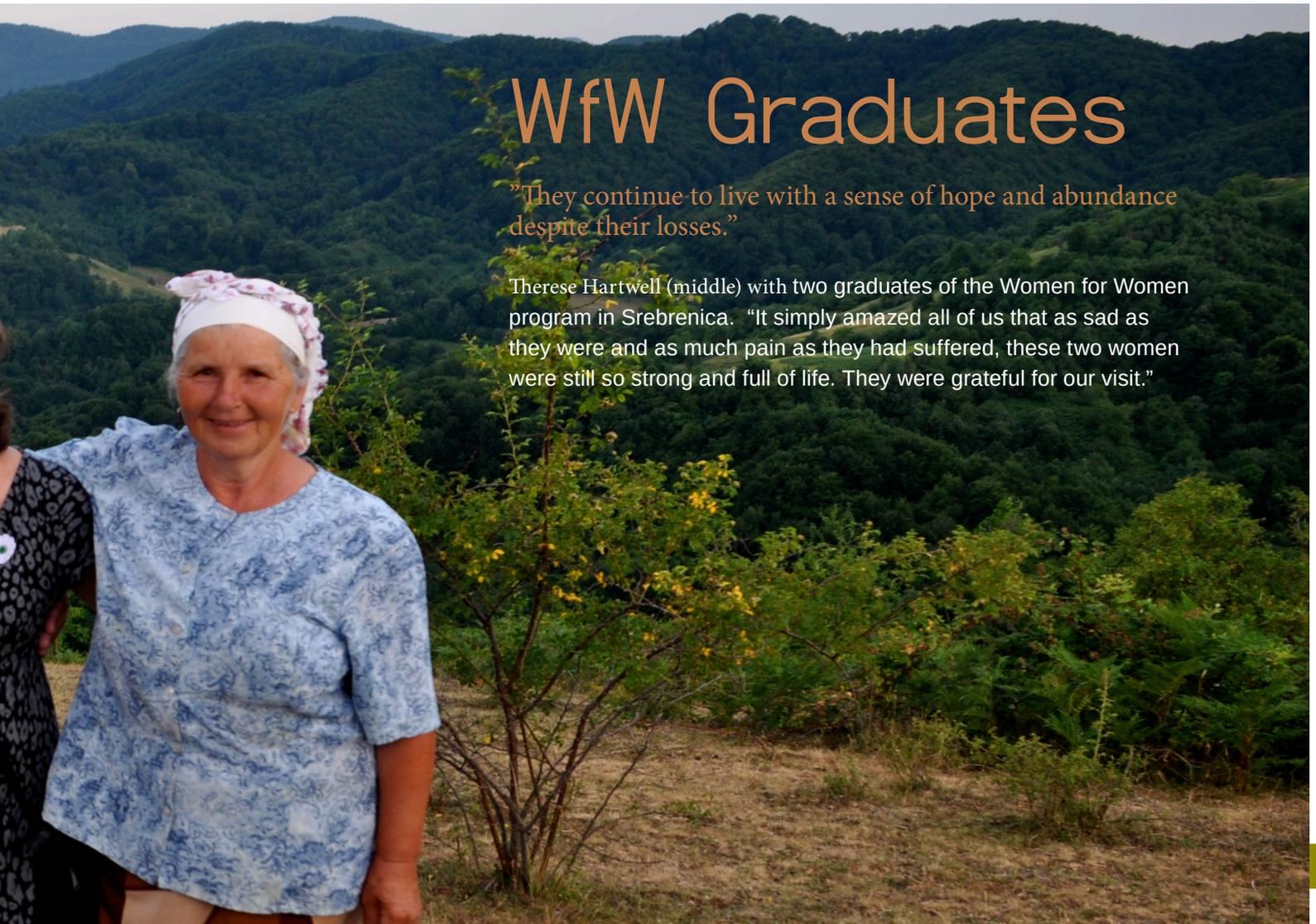
I had the honor of participating in the annual “March of Peace,” a 3-day, 120 km trek through Bosnia and Herzegovina to Srebrenica. This event is significant in that it commemorates those vic-

tims of the largest mass murder committed in Europe since World War II. In July 1995, more than 8,000 Bosniak (Bosnian Muslim) men and boys in and around the town of Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia were killed over a several day span. The march follows the same route as the refugees took as they tried to escape the horror of the war. Over the years, this march, on this path, has attracted thousands of participants from all over the world. I was able to take part in the trek with a fundraising team from Women for

WfW Graduates

”They continue to live with a sense of hope and abundance despite their losses.”

Therese Hartwell (middle) with two graduates of the Women for Women program in Srebrenica. “It simply amazed all of us that as sad as they were and as much pain as they had suffered, these two women were still so strong and full of life. They were grateful for our visit.”



Women International, an organization whose mission is to serve women survivors of war.

derpinnings of war as well as a passion to contribute to a more peaceful world. These

two factors are what led me to participate in the March of Peace.

The physical challenges of the march, while intimidating, were not insurmountable. Heat and humidity were one of the biggest obstacles as the temperature ranged from 35-40 degrees Celsius through most of the trek. I soon resorted to drenching myself in the water from the water trucks supplied along the way, with no regard to what I looked like as a result. Any sense of vanity went out the window--cooling down was all that mattered! While I also knew that the distance of the march would be

Having had the opportunity to live in Saudi Arabia for the last eight years and travelling extensively around the Middle East, Africa and Europe, I have had the chance to meet people from all over the world. I have been fortunate enough to experience the commonality among people despite differences in their origins. This has given me a strong desire to better understand the un-



Therese Hartwell all smiles at the beginning of the "March for Peace" trek in Bosnia, 2012

Therese Hartwell (center) with the fundraising team for Women for Women group photo before the trek.





Women for Women International

Women for Women International works with socially excluded women in eight countries where war and conflict have devastated lives and communities.

Each woman they serve has her own story—some of loved ones murdered, and others of physical and emotional trauma. Most have endured a struggle for survival.

Their one-year program helps these

women learn job skills and receive business training so they can earn a living. Women become confident, independent and productive, embracing their importance in rebuilding their families, their communities and ultimately their nations.

Interested in learning more about Women for Women International? Visit their [website](#) to find out how you can help support their programs.

challenging, I had not realized just how much of the terrain covered was hilly to mountainous. At one point, about mid-way through the second day of the trek, our guides pointed out that we had just walked over this beautiful mountain in the distance. That was an incredible moment that kept us moving forward!

With safety being first, Red Cross workers heavily patrolled the trek, attending to participants who suffered from blisters, heat exhaustion or other medical needs. There were no eating or bathroom facilities set up for us, which meant carrying your own food and simply finding a private spot to answer nature's call. In the end, I felt lucky to come away with only a few minor blisters.

Staying hydrated, good shoe selection and preparing ahead of time made all the difference.

As daunting as the physical aspect was, we found ourselves equally tested by the emotional challenges. Naturally, the obstacles we faced paled in comparison to those experienced by the men and boys on the original march. They were forced to hide from enemy soldiers and lived in constant fear of being shot or blown up by a mine. On our team, we had a man, Elvir, who had been part of the original march to safety when he was only 16 years old. Elvir, a ruggedly handsome man with a deep sadness in his eyes, came along to share his story and help us understand the events we were commemorating. At the

Additional Resources on Women as a Force for Peace

UN WOMEN Securing the Peace: Guiding the International Community towards Women's Effective Participation throughout Peace Processes ([publication](#))

USIP. United States Institute of Peace. Gender and Peacebuilding: Why Women's Involvement in Peacebuilding Matters article by [Kathleen Kuehnast](#)

PEACEWOMEN. The PeaceWomen Project is a program of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), which promotes the role of women in preventing conflict, and the equal and full participation of women in all efforts to create and maintain international peace and security ([website](#)).

time of the massacre, he joined a group of 13 men and boys who tried to escape through the woods. Out of the group, only he and one other man survived. It took him over 70 days to reach safety as he tried to stay out of sight of the Serb forces, often losing his way. Sadly, Elvir's father and brothers who did not flee "into the woods" were all murdered near Srebrenica. When he was finally reunited with his mother, she was so overcome by emotion that she fainted. Elvir told us that despite what he had experienced he had to go on with his life for his mother's sake. She had already lost so much. Elvir's story was so tragic that it was almost too hard to believe, but sadly it's all too common of a story.

One of the most moving, and unexpected, aspects of the march was the tremendous support from local villagers who lined the route handing out coffee (a sign of friendship in Bosnia) and encouragement. Bosnian participants seemed especially appreciative that we, as foreigners with no direct connection to the country, had come to share their experience.

A memory that stands out strong for me is from the second day of the trek. The morning started out cool and crisp with the aroma of strong Bosnian coffee in the air. You could hear lovely, gentle music coming from the local mosque. We set off marching into the beautiful rolling hills of Bosnia; dotted with red-roofed houses, smoke curling up from a distant chimney. I remember looking at this idyllic setting and finding it so hard to believe that less than two decades earlier, dead bodies, stray bullets and remnants from detonated mines had lined this path; despite the frequent signs marking mass graves and potential hidden mines. How had this charming land come to be embroiled in such a heinous conflict? How had people who had lived together peacefully for generations turned on their neighbors so viciously? Are we all equally vulnerable to a sudden trigger that plays

upon human frailties and causes fear and hate to lead us to atrocious acts? How can we prevent this from happening again and again? Unfortunately, I ended up with many more questions than answers.

As I continued to ponder these, and many other, questions, I had a fascinating experience one day that gave me a moment of insight into one of the ways in which atrocities in war can occur. A large number of the people who participate in this march

are boys and men, many of them young. At the end of the first day, I noticed hundreds of men, shirtless, stripped to their shorts, showering in the water from the water trucks. Suddenly, I could feel this palpable sense of testosterone in the air. I even felt a surge of my own testosterone after just completing a rigorous physical endeavor. In that

moment, I had a sense of the collective power of all that strength and how that surge in a hormone could lead to an intense endeavor like war. How this could cause people to do just about anything, even things that would normally be unthinkable. It was a sobering and frightening realization of the capacity for violence that lies within all of us.

With all of the different and intense experiences, undoubtedly, the most poignant moment came at the end of the trek. Exhausted and dirty, we took our final steps walking down the main road of the town, carrying the Women for Women banner to the cheers of onlookers and entered the cemetery where the remains of the victims of the massacre are buried.

Because victims of the genocide were tossed into mass graves, bodies (or parts of them) are still being discovered. Each year, at the end of the trek, there is a Commemorative Ceremony where they bury those bodies found. We were there to bury the remains of over 500 people. Suddenly, as we entered the cemetery, the reason for our participation in this challenge and the enormity of the trag-



A woman stands near the area of Sarajevo that was used for the 1984 Winter Olympic Games which now holds the graves of thousands of victims of the Siege of Sarajevo. (Chris Rainier, ca. 1993-1994)

edy we were memorializing became crystal clear.

The focus on surviving the trek, putting one foot in front of the other, was gone, and my contained feelings came pouring out. An endless line of narrow green coffins, the massive number of white gravestones, and the granite wall with a long list of names of people already buried. The women, young and old, mourning their lost men and trying to live with the aftermath, all washed away any sense of physical pain or discomfort from the trek and left only raw emotion. The tears finally flowed.

The heartache continued after the ceremony when our group visited two graduates of the Women for Women program in Srebrenica. Each of these women had lost their husbands and all three of their sons, and this day brought back all of their painful memories. One of the women had lost her husband to a heart attack and a son in a drowning accident before the war. She lost her other two sons during the massacre. The other woman's husband and three sons were all killed during the genocide. Her husband left one day to find water and never returned. All three of her sons were taken away and killed in the massacre. It simply amazed all of us that as sad as they were and as much pain as they had suffered, these two women were still so strong and full of life. They were grateful for our visit. They continue to live life with a sense of hope and abundance despite their losses. That is an inspiration to us all.

The final segment of our trip involved visiting Women for Women programs around the Sarajevo area to see firsthand the work they are doing. The highlight for me was the opportunity to meet the young woman who I was then sponsoring through Women for Women. My "sister" is almost exactly the same age as my daughter, and we felt an immediate connection. At the time of our meeting, her mother had recently died and was no longer around to protect her from an abusive brother. When this young woman called the police for help (very unusual for a woman to have the courage to do in Bosnia) and was hospitalized for her injuries, her father kicked her out of the house for involving the police! In her

father's view, my "sister" had dishonored the family by going outside for help rather than her brother having dishonored the family through his abuse. This meeting reminded me what a long way we still have to go in protecting women from violence.

What a life altering experience the March for Peace was for all of us who participated! One might think that I came away depressed and hopeless, but the truth is just the opposite. I took with me the inspiration of women who, like so many others, must carry on in the aftermath of war and the spirit, courage and resourcefulness that they exhibit in doing so. All too many of these conflicts are still going on.

But times are changing. More and more women are becoming agents of change in their communities and saying "No More." Surely we as human beings can do better than this. Surely we are creative enough to find some method other than violence to resolve our conflicts. Surely we can find a way to replace fear and hatred with understanding and compassion. If we are to prosper as a world, surely we must.

Want to know more?

To read about the 2013 March for Peace and hear more about Elvir, Brita Fernandez Schmidt, executive director of Women for Women in the UK recounts her experience [here](#).

If you are interested in learning more about the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and/or the massacre in Srebrenica, the following books are informative and interesting:

The End Game by David Rhode, who won the Pulitzer Prize for his work in uncovering the Srebrenica genocide.

War Hospital by Sheri Fink